



*The Upper Campus of Luther Seminary is depicted in this illustration from The Forward March of Faith, published in 1943 by the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.*

**AN ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:  
LUTHER SEMINARY UPPER CAMPUS  
COMO AVENUE AND LUTHER PLACE  
SAINT ANTHONY PARK, SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA**

**PREPARED BY  
JESSICA BERGLIN AND CHARLENE ROISE  
HESS, ROISE AND COMPANY  
100 NORTH FIRST STREET  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55401**

**MARCH 2016**

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND METHODOLOGY

Ecumen, a development company specializing in senior housing, has engaged Luther Seminary for options to develop a site along Luther Place on the seminary's Upper Campus in the Saint Anthony Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. The proposed project would displace three existing houses (Houses 18, 19, and 21) that date from the early twentieth century and a non-historic two-car garage to construct new senior co-op and rental units. Because anticipated improvements would likely involve federal funding, Ecumen retained historical consultants Hess, Roise and Company to evaluate the site's National Register eligibility. Bockman Hall and Muskego Church have been listed in the National Register, but the significance of the Upper Campus, particularly the landscape and the arrangement of buildings therein, has not been evaluated.

Research was conducted in the Hess Roise in-house research files, Ramsey County Historical Society, Saint Paul Public Library, Northwest Architectural Archives and John R. Borchert Map Library at the University of Minnesota, Luther Seminary Archives, and Luther Seminary Facilities Management Office. Site visits were conducted in February 2016, and current color photographs date to that time.



*The project site as viewed from Luther Place.*

**CURRENT SITE PLAN**



Luther Seminary Upper Campus

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

### *A Solid Foundation*

The Upper Campus of Luther Seminary occupies an approximately eleven-acre site north of the intersection of Como Avenue and Luther Place in the Saint Anthony Park neighborhood of Saint Paul, Minnesota. The campus originally occupied a heavily wooded eight-acre lot when the United Church Seminary—a predecessor to the current Luther Seminary—was founded there in 1900, but this section was eventually expanded to the north. Today, the area is commonly referred to as the Upper Campus. A separate section of Luther Seminary, called the Lower Campus, is located further north along Como Avenue, downhill from the Upper Campus. The Lower Campus dates to an expansion in the mid-twentieth century.

The historic nucleus of Luther Seminary falls within the original eight-acre wooded lot that is dominated by the E-shaped Neoclassical-style Bockman Hall. This three-story facility served as the main building for the United Church Seminary and, following a merger in 1917, Luther Theological Seminary (now called Luther Seminary). A cluster of two- and two-and-one-half-story residences, a library and classroom building, and a pioneer-era log church are situated along the hillside to the east and northeast of Bockman Hall.<sup>1</sup>

When the United Church Seminary opened its doors in 1902, the main building housed all of the classrooms, student dormitories, chapel, library, dining hall, kitchen, administration offices, and faculty housing. The seminary quickly outgrew its single centralized facility and began adding dedicated faculty houses in 1904. That same year, the seminary's affiliated synod—the United Norwegian Lutheran Church—acquired Muskego Church, a log structure dating to 1843 that was reportedly the “first structure built by Norse immigrants in America dedicated exclusively to the ministries of Word and Sacrament.” It was built at the Muskego settlement near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but the congregation outgrew the facility by 1869 and replaced it with a larger church. The log structure was then relocated to a local farm where it was used as a barn until the synod purchased, disassembled, and relocated it to the seminary in Saint Anthony Park. After its reassembly on top of United Church Seminary's eastern hillside, Muskego Church was encased with wood siding, which remained in place until approximately 1970.<sup>2</sup>

In the early 1910s, four houses (Houses 6–9) were constructed atop the hillside north of Bockman Hall to host missionaries on furlough. The mission houses, as they were called, were constructed by the Women's Missionary Federation of the United Church. The auxiliary was organized by Rebecca Oline Dahl, the wife of a local pastor, whose name appears on building

---

<sup>1</sup> Patricia Murphy, “United Church Seminary,” National Register of Historic Places nomination, July 1984, 7:1–2, 8:1–2; Saint Paul Building Permit No. 37685, September 25, 1900. The permit places the building at 2375 West Como Avenue, an address that was carried over to additional buildings in the near vicinity.

<sup>2</sup> *Insurance Maps of Saint Paul, Minnesota, 1903–1904* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1903), 3:403; “Welcome to Old Muskego Church on the Luther Theological Seminary Campus,” undated pamphlet, Muskego Church files, Luther Seminary Archives, Gullixson Hall, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minnesota (hereafter Seminary Archives); John Hackett, “Muskego Church,” National Register of Historic Places nomination, November 1974, 8:1; “Log Chapel, St. Paul, Minn.,” Historic American Buildings Survey MN-29-24, [1936?]; Muskego Church files, Seminary Archives; unsigned letter to Oliver Swenumson, January 8, 1973, Muskego Church files, Seminary Archives.

permits for two of the houses. The dwellings were located near the main building so missionaries could establish personal relationships with the seminary community, “especially . . . students who could be counted on to support them later when they became pastors,” according to Gracia Grindal, author of “The Role of Women in Seminary Life.” The mission houses transitioned over time to become faculty residences and student housing. Only two of the four remain on the seminary’s campus. The westernmost two were relocated to the surrounding neighborhood in the 1980s to facilitate construction of the Olson Campus Center.<sup>3</sup>

A three-story, stone-faced library and classroom building is situated within the cluster of buildings east of Bockman Hall. Now called Gullixson Hall, it was constructed in 1948–1949 and displaced one of the early faculty houses, which was relocated to the north and situated atop the hill next to another professor’s residence that was already on that site.<sup>4</sup>

The faculty houses, Muskego Church, and Gullixson Hall form the eastern edge of an expansive lawn on the hillside in front of Bockman Hall, which edges the northern boundary of the landscape. The diagonally-oriented Como Avenue and Luther Place (originally called Grantham Street) respectively form the southwest and southeast boundaries of the lawn area. For the most part, the buildings were sited to maximize views of the lawn, with many of them fronting to the west to overlook the landscape.

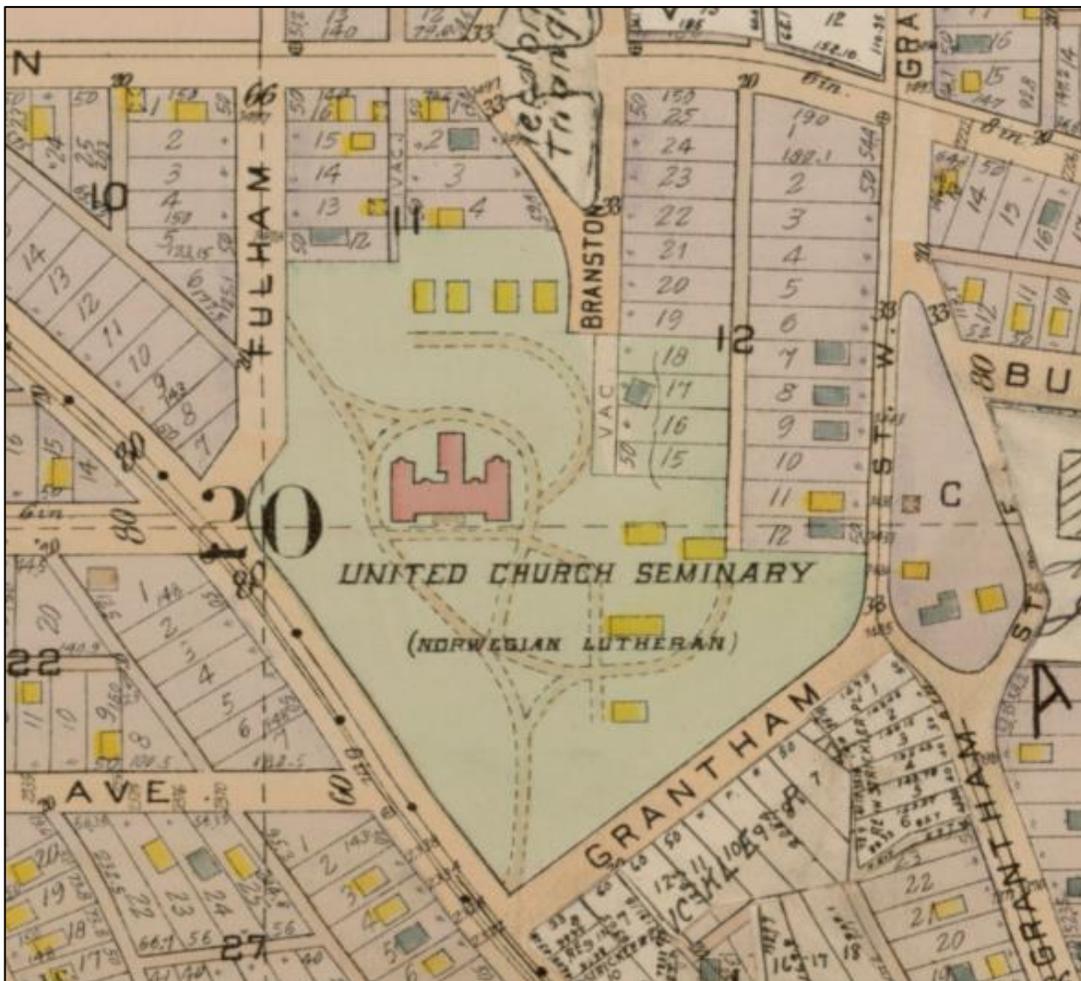
A linear, concrete walkway crosses the lawn, stretching from the steps of Bockman Hall and southward to Como Avenue. Mature trees dot the landscape, which originally featured curvilinear drives that wound through the lawn and around the buildings. Most prominently, an unpaved scenic drive historically entered the campus at the intersection of Como and Grantham, swept across the lawn, and circled Bockman Hall before exiting onto Fulham Street behind the building. A secondary fork in the drive wound through the faculty housing area on the eastern hillside. The picturesque site was described as “admirably adapted for student life,” according to a 1914–1915 course catalog for the seminary. “It combines all the advantages that can be claimed for either city or country as the proper location for a theological seminary. A trolley line passes the Seminary grounds and students have easy access to either St. Paul or Minneapolis.”<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Saint Paul Building Permit No. 62369, December 18, 1913; Saint Paul Building Permit No. 62370, December 18, 1913; Gracia Grindal, “The Role of Women in Seminary Life,” in *Thanksgiving and Hope: A Collection of Essays Chronicling 125 Years of the People, Events and Movements in the Antecedent Schools that have Formed Luther Seminary*, ed. Frederick H. Gonnerman (Saint Paul: Luther Seminary, 1998) 83; Ellen Elhard (Director of Facilities and Auxiliary Services, Luther Seminary), in discussion with Jessica Berglin, February 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Lang and Raugland, “Library-Classroom Building, Luther Theological Seminary,” March 25, 1948, Lang and Raugland Collection, Northwest Architectural Archives, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (hereafter Northwest Architectural Archives).

<sup>5</sup> *Plat Book of the City of Saint Paul* (Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins, 1916), Plate 35; *The Seminary of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, Catalog and Announcements, Twenty-fifth Year 1914–1915* ([Saint Paul, Minn.]: The Seminary, June 1915), 15–16.



*The seminary was nestled within the residential neighborhood of Saint Anthony Park. Winding drives and pathways encircled many of the buildings. The street now known as Luther Place was originally called Grantham; it was renamed by the mid-twentieth century. A model of the campus (top) was featured in a 1917 seminary yearbook. (Den Forenede Kirkes Seminar 1890–1917, *Luther Seminary Archives*; Plat Book of the City of Saint Paul (Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins, 1916), Plate 35)*



*The three-story temple-front main building (top) visually dominated the landscape and was the only building when the United Church Seminary opened in 1902. Faculty houses were added along the eastern hillside within a couple of years (center). They were situated along the eastern edge of the lawn and were oriented to the west to maximize views of the landscape, which featured winding drives and groves of trees. Bockman Hall continues to dominate the landscape of the Upper Campus today, as evident by the 2016 site photograph (bottom).  
(Luther Seminary Archives Collection, Minnesota Reflections Digital Library)*

Houses 18 and 21 date to this early era and were the first two faculty houses constructed at the seminary, although the buildings were labeled with different numbers until the 1960s.

Constructed in 1904, House 21 (top) is a two-and-one-half-story Colonial Revival-style house with a one-story pedimented porch on the west side. It was originally numbered House 1/2375A Como Avenue and was sometimes referred to as the president's house, although many residences throughout Luther Seminary's history have been designated as such. It was built by Olaf Swenson following the designs of the Saint Paul architectural firm of Omeyer and Thori.

Constructed in 1906, House 18 (center), a two-and-one-half-story Neoclassical-style house with a pedimented portico supported by four two-story fluted Ionic columns on its west (front) facade, was originally numbered House 2/2375B Como Avenue and was also referred to as the president's house during parts of the seminary's history. It had two units within the residence: one on the upper level and one on the lower level.<sup>6</sup>

House 19 (bottom), known early on as House 4, was constructed sometime between 1917 and 1923. The numbering as House 4 is somewhat misleading, as there were five faculty houses in place by 1917, but this building was not identified as one of them. The house was in place by 1923 according to an aerial photograph from that year. In the photograph, which appears on the following page, the two-story house with an enclosed one-story porch on its west side is visible on the hilltop immediately south of Muskego Church. A 1928 topographical map indicates that it was originally a stucco dwelling, although asbestos-shingle siding has since been applied to the exterior walls.<sup>7</sup>



*Current site photographs*

<sup>6</sup> Saint Paul Building Permit No. 42987, August 1, 1904; Saint Paul Building Permit No. 46985 1/2, October 29, 1906; "Index to Seminary Map Houses and Apartments," January 1963, Seminary Archives. The permits identify the 1904 dwelling as 2375A West Como Avenue and the 1906 dwelling as 2375B West Como Avenue. Campus buildings were renumbered in the 1960s according to "Index to Seminary Map Houses and Apartments," which identifies House 21 as "Old #1" and House 18 as "Old #2." To simplify the discussion, this report will refer to the houses by the most recent numbering system.

<sup>7</sup> *Den Forenede Kirkes Seminar 1890–1917*, Seminary Archives; Lang and Raugland, "Topographical Plat of Luther Theological Seminary," March 1928, Luther Seminary Facilities Management Files, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minnesota (hereafter Facilities Management Files).



*Four “professorboliger,” or professors’ homes, were identified in the 1917 yearbook: House 21 (upper left), House 12 (originally House 11, lower left), House 15 (originally House 3, lower center), and House 20 (originally House 5, lower right). House 18 (upper right) served as the “bestyrerboligen,” or manager’s house, following the 1917 merger. This notation likely signified the president’s residence, a function House 18 served until 1930, when a new president’s house was constructed off of the main campus for Dr. Thaddeus Franke Gullixson, who started his tenure as president that year.  
(Den Forenede Kirkes Seminar 1890–1917, Luther Seminary Archives)*



*House 19, identified with a yellow arrow at left, was not featured in the 1917 yearbook but it does appear in this aerial photograph from 1923. This image also shows the linear sidewalk extending south from Bockman Hall and the curvilinear drives that circumnavigated the site. Eventually, the winding pathways were removed throughout the 1940s and early 1950s. Despite these changes, the long walkway in front of Bockman Hall is extant and remains one of the primary organizational characteristics of the landscape.  
(Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online, John R. Borchert Map Library, University of Minnesota)*

## *New Beginnings*

The year 1917 marked a turning point in the site's history. That year, three separate Norwegian-American Lutheran churches and their associated seminaries merged. Luther Theological Seminary combined the Norwegian Synod's Luther Seminary, located near Hamline Avenue in Saint Paul; the Hauge Synod's Red Wing Seminary in Red Wing, Minnesota; and the United Norwegian Lutheran Church's United Church Seminary in the Saint Anthony Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. The seminary was to be the principal educational institution for the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, the new synod that was established as a result of the 1917 merger. The consolidation combined faculty as well as philosophies, uniting three instructors from the earlier Luther Seminary, two from Red Wing, and five from the United Church Seminary to prepare around one hundred young men from all three institutions for ministry work. Initially, the seminary planned to operate from the two Saint Paul campuses, but this arrangement proved to be "unnecessarily expensive and inconvenient," according to Eugene Fevold, a contributor to *Striving for Ministry: Centennial Essays Interpreting the Heritage of Luther Theological Seminary*. Beginning in the fall of 1918, Saint Anthony Park became the primary campus for the seminary, although it was several years before the Hamline property were sold.<sup>8</sup>

Following the 1917 merger, House 18 was named the president's house, although a different, unidentified dwelling had served this function in previous years. According to Paul Daniels, a longtime archivist and curator at the seminary, the position of president rotated among faculty members in the early years, so the designation of the president's house was similarly fluid. Fevold also documented this tradition. His article in *Striving for Ministry* relays the Norwegian Synod's practice of rotating the presidency at the earlier Luther Seminary near Hamline Avenue: "From 1902 until the merger, in accord with a policy established by the synod, the presidency of the seminary was rotated annually among the four professors."<sup>9</sup>

Marcus O. Bockman was named president of the merged seminary in 1917 and presumably lived in House 18 until he retired from the seminary in 1936. He hailed from the United Church Seminary, where he also served as president. Bockman maintained his post until 1930, when he stepped down from the leadership position but continued as a professor. He had hoped to withdraw from the position in 1925, but the synod did not approve his resignation at the time. Over Bockman's thirteen-year tenure as president, enrollment gradually grew from around 100 students to approximately 150. Faculty growth, however, did not parallel the rise in student enrollment. In fact, three of the ten professors died in the years following the merger and it was not until 1925 that another member was added to the roster.<sup>10</sup>

Students primarily came from the colleges associated with the antecedent synods, including Saint Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, and Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. To accommodate

---

<sup>8</sup> Eugene L. Fevold, "Laying Foundations in a New Land," in *Striving for Ministry: Centennial Essays Interpreting the Heritage of Luther Theological Seminary*, ed. Warren A. Quanbeck, Eugene L. Fevold, Gerhard E. Frost, and Paul G. Sonnack (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1977), 30–35.

<sup>9</sup> Paul Daniels (Head of Arts and Archives, Luther Seminary), in discussion with Jessica Berglin, February 2016; Fevold, "Laying Foundations," 25; *Den Forenede Kirkes Seminar 1890–1917*.

<sup>10</sup> Fevold, "Laying Foundations," 32–36.

the growing numbers, a third story was added to the central wing of the main seminary building in 1923 to create additional dormitory space. The kitchen and dining hall were also remodeled as part of the building renovation.<sup>11</sup>

As renovations were going on at the main seminary building in the 1920s, a “most glaring need” for a dedicated library building became fully apparent. Fevold described the existing arrangement as “spread around in several rooms” with “inadequate space for new accessions.” According to the author, the seminary “repeatedly” requested a library throughout the 1920s “but the synod . . . felt unable to authorize its construction.”<sup>12</sup>

### ***Renewed Focus***

Church leaders finally sanctioned a capital campaign to raise the money for a dedicated library building in 1930. Although the fundraising efforts were thwarted by the onset of the Depression, launching the campaign that year coincided with the election of a new seminary president. Dr. Thaddeus Franke Gullixson, a pastor from Minot, North Dakota, brought a renewed focus on advanced scholarship to the institution. One of Gullixson’s charges was improving opportunities for graduate-level studies at the seminary, which was one of the primary objectives established by the 1917 merger. He personified this goal, having spent a year of post-graduate studies at Johns Hopkins University following the completion of his undergraduate degree at Luther College and his seminary years at the earlier Luther Seminary near Hamline Avenue. To provide such offerings at Luther Theological Seminary, however, required adequate facilities and qualified faculty members, so Gullixson and church leaders enacted new policies to support these institutional goals.<sup>13</sup>

In 1934, the synod approved a retirement policy for professors who were at least seventy years old. The rule took effect in 1936, and by 1949, the seminary had an entirely new lineup of professors. Many of the new professors had earned doctorates and all of them had completed some type of graduate work. Amidst the faculty transitions, proposals were in the works for physically transforming the campus to reflect the seminary’s shifting focus. In 1944–1945, the the Minneapolis architectural firm of Lang and Raugland was commissioned to develop schemes for an expansion. Several ideas were presented, including some traditional quad layouts that would have demolished Bockman Hall and many of the faculty houses to fill the open lawn area with new buildings, walkways, and plazas. A few of these are pictured on the following pages, but none were actually realized.<sup>14</sup>

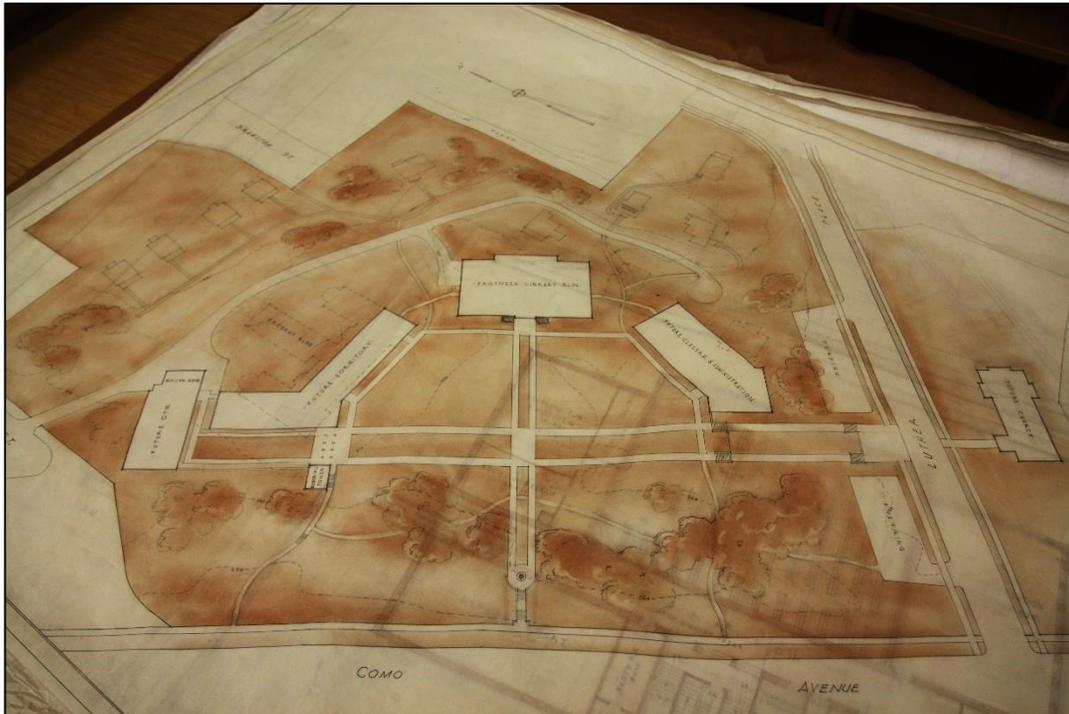
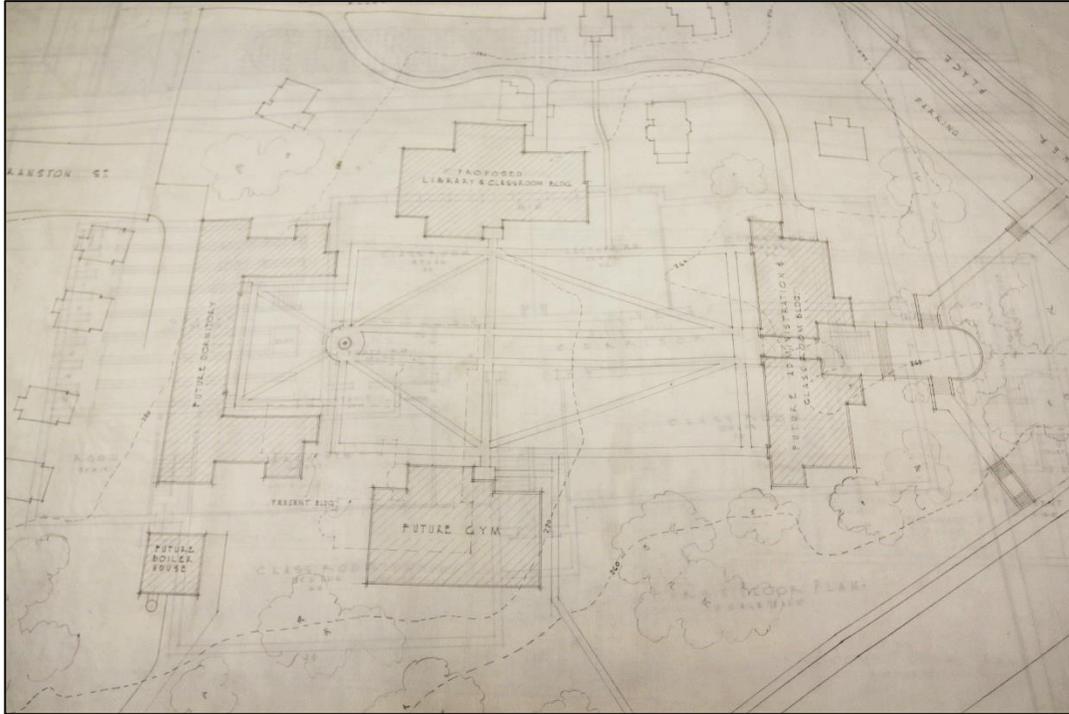
---

<sup>11</sup> Murphy, “United Church Seminary,” 7:1; Saint Paul Building Permit No. 4361, dated August 20, 1923.

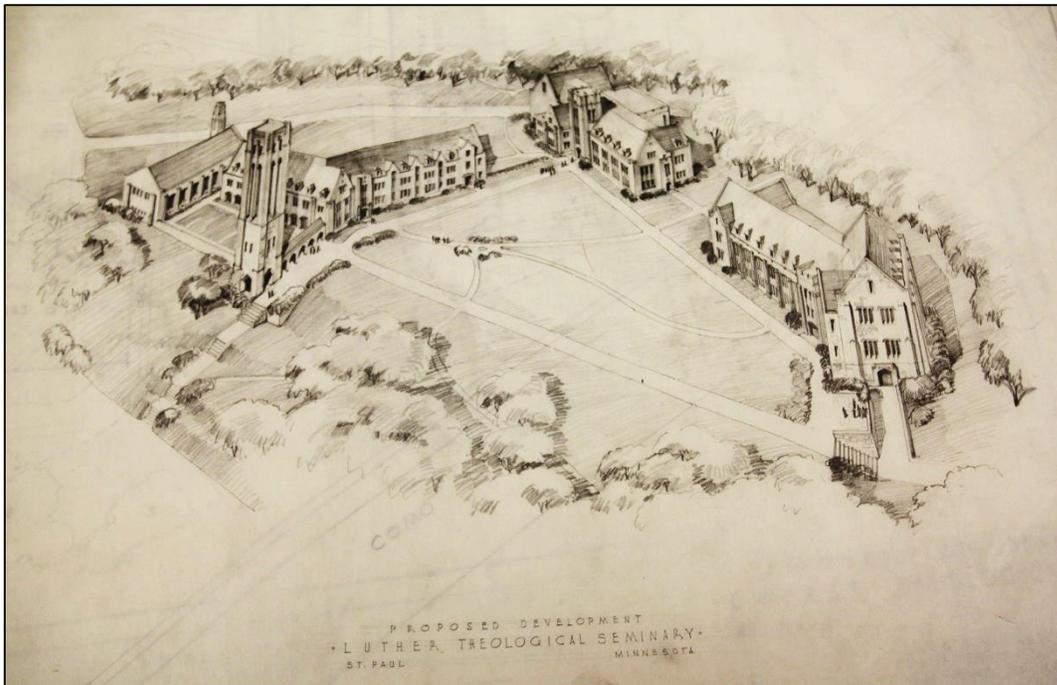
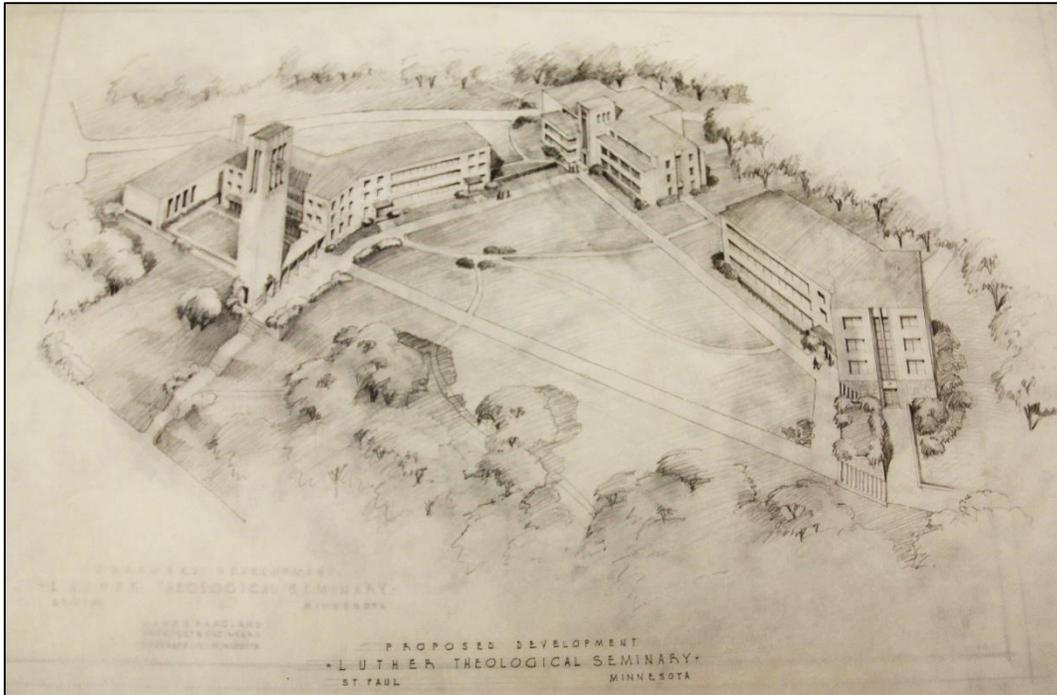
<sup>12</sup> Fevold, “Laying Foundations,” 35.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 37–38.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*; Lang and Raugland drawings for Luther Seminary, various drawings dated 1944 and 1945, Lang and Raugland Collection, Northwest Architectural Archives.



*The plan in the upper photograph was drafted in 1945, while the one in the lower image was presented in 1944. Both represented a radical change from the seminary's existing landscape, although neither was constructed. (Lang and Raugland Collection, Northwest Architectural Archives)*



*The architects presented two different aesthetics based on the same layout. The top photograph shows a progressive International-Style campus, while the bottom image depicts a more traditional Collegiate Gothic style. Both drawings were completed in 1944 and appear to follow the layout shown in the bottom image on the previous page. (Lang and Raugland Collection, Northwest Architectural Archives)*

These schemes from 1944 and 1945 were apparently too extreme, as none were adopted. In 1948, however, an effort was revived to construct a new library and classroom building. Once again, the seminary commissioned Lang and Raugland for the task. This time the architects developed a more conservative approach, positioning the proposed building immediately east of Bockman Hall to maintain the open landscape in front of the main building. This strategy preserved the lawn area but displaced one faculty house (House 3, renumbered House 15 in the 1960s), which was relocated to the hillside to the north next to another professor's dwelling.<sup>15</sup>

The eastern hillside throughout the cluster of faculty houses was partially regraded, portions of the older curvilinear drives were removed, and new concrete walkways were laid in conjunction with construction of the library and classroom building, which was later named Gullixson Hall. The configuration of the existing pathways that extend through the cluster of faculty houses dates to this campaign. Two concrete sidewalks were installed to run from Luther Place to the cluster of buildings along the eastern hillside. The first one ran in front of House 21 and House 18 before changing direction at the library to access either the Muskego Church to the east or Bockman Hall to the west. The second one scaled the steeper hillside further east to run alongside House 19 and in front of Muskego Church before passing behind the library and in front of the two hilltop houses in the northeast corner of the site. From there, the path curved westward to link to the row of missionary houses that were located behind Bockman Hall. Concrete stairs and metal-pipe railings were installed at the same time in front of several of the buildings.<sup>16</sup>



*A view of the faculty houses circa 1915. The house in the foreground on the left was relocated when Gullixson Hall was constructed in 1948–1949. House 18 (far right) and the clapboard-sided Muskego Church (left background) are also depicted in this image. (Den Forenede Kirkes Seminar 1890–1917, Luther Seminary Archives)*

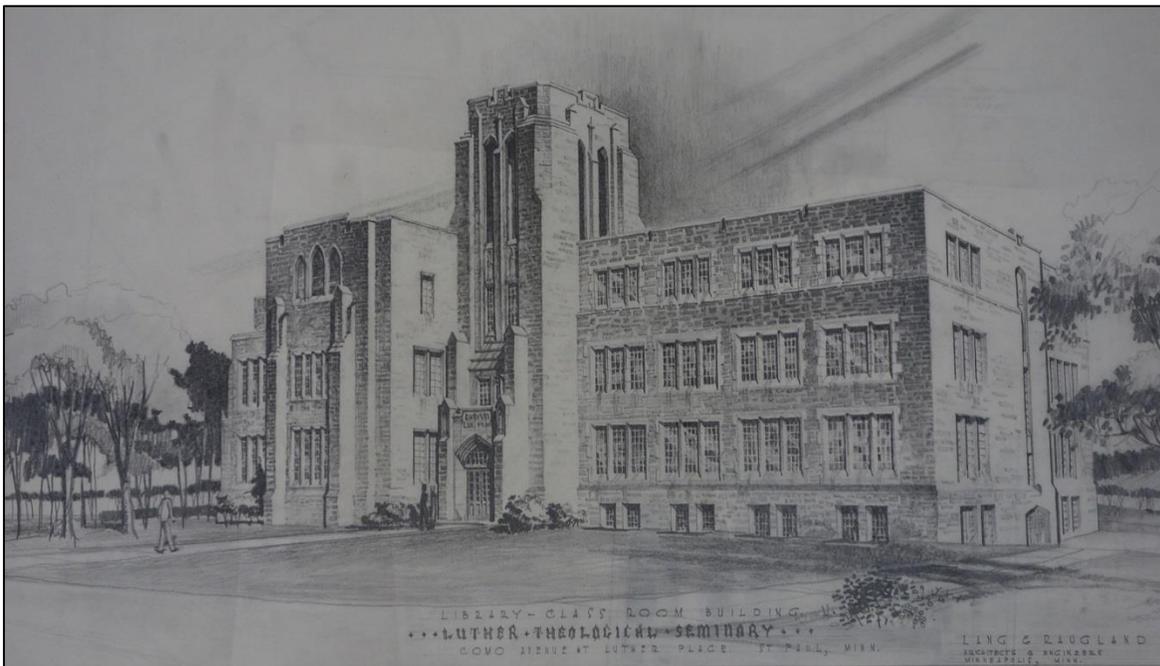
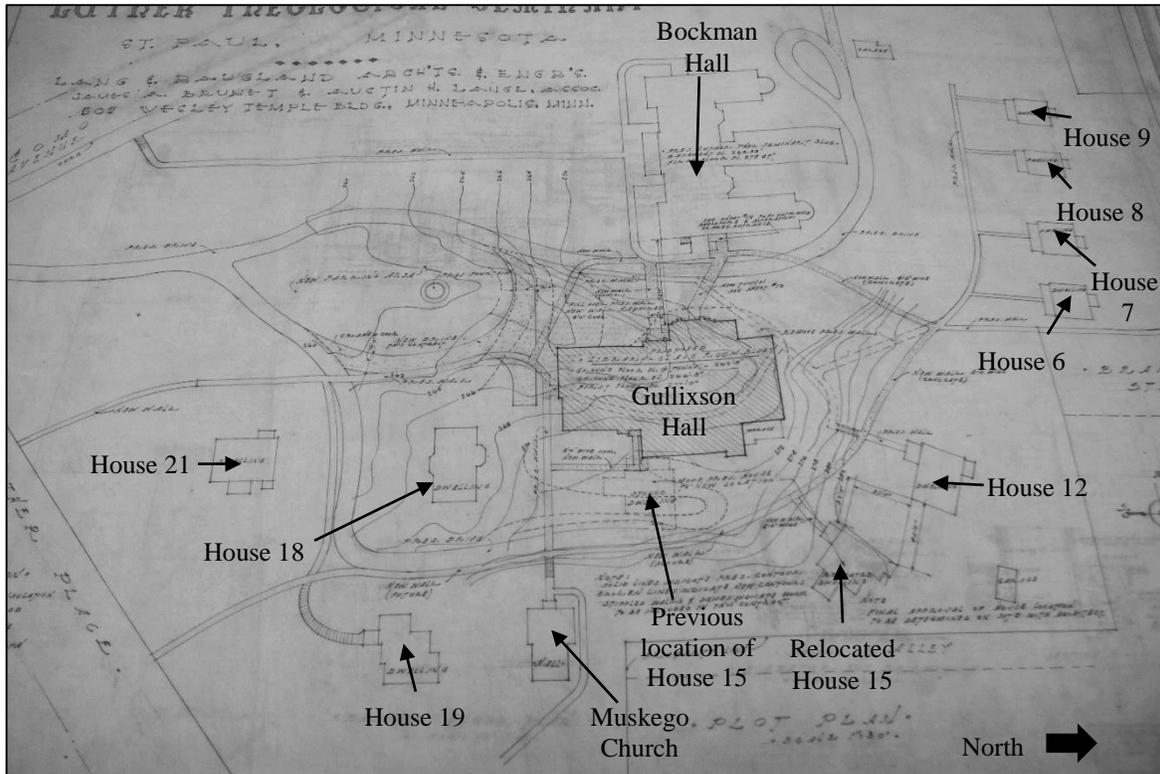
Another alteration from the Lang and Raugland plan created a parking area along a looped drive in front of House 18. A fountain in the grassy area in the middle of the drive was removed and the landscape was regraded to accomplish this task.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Lang and Raugland, “Library-Classroom Building,” 1948.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



*The library and classroom building, later named Gullixson Hall, was completed in 1949 and dedicated the following year. With the construction of this new building, the seminary finally had a separate library building with adequate research facilities that were necessary to offer graduate studies, which was one of the primary objectives set forth in the 1917 merger. (Lang and Raugland Collection, Northwest Architectural Archives).*

The opening of Gullixson Hall in 1949 “at long last . . . filled one of the most glaring needs of the seminary in providing adequate space for library, administrative and faculty offices, and badly needed classrooms,” according to *Striving for Ministry*. The building, which cost \$600,000 and was built of Kasota stone, was dedicated in 1950. That same year, the seminary began offering graduate courses to theological students, and in 1952 the position of Director of Graduate Studies was established.<sup>18</sup>

A landscape improvement project followed the construction of the new library building. In 1951, the Minneapolis firm of Morell and Nichols was commissioned to develop a new scheme for walkways, parking areas, and site grading. As part of the plan, the circuitous drives were removed and the linear walkway extending south from Bockman Hall was reworked. A double pathway was installed near the base of Bockman Hall’s front stairs, extending for approximately one hundred feet before merging into a single pathway that continued to split the lawn on its stretch toward Como Avenue. Two symmetrical diagonal walkways connected Gullixson Hall and the southeast corner of Bockman Hall to the point where the double walkway ended. The southern end of the walkway was also slightly reconfigured near Como Avenue. Previously, it bent to the southeast to meet the intersection of Como and Valentine Avenues and stairs scaled the embankment down to the sidewalk. As a result of the Morell and Nichols alterations, the pathway was straightened to extend directly to Como Avenue and the slope was regraded to produce a gentler incline. Under the 1951 landscape scheme, new parking lots were introduced behind Bockman Hall and in front of Houses 18 and 21. The earlier looped drive in front of the houses (from the Lang and Raugland improvements) was carried into the Morell and Nichols plan, which expanded the parking lot. The looped drive no longer exists after parking lot expansions from the late twentieth century. The concrete walkways throughout the hillside remained fairly intact during the 1951 campaign, although repairs were made where necessary.<sup>19</sup>

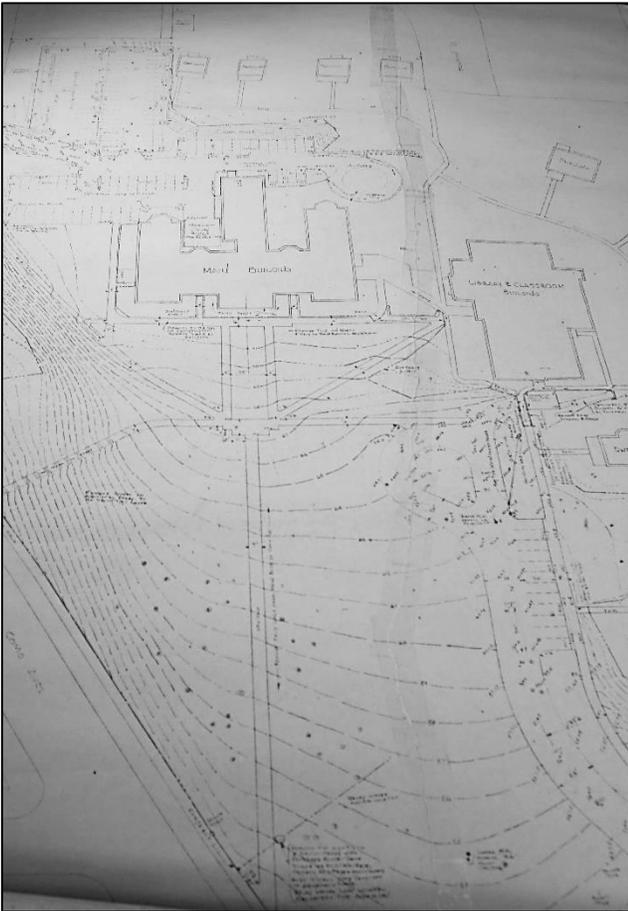
A number of trees were removed throughout the lawn area to accommodate the regrading called for in the 1951 landscape plan. Aerial photographs from 1945 and 1953, reproduced on the following page, show a remarkable change in the tree coverage, particularly at the southern end of the lawn. The later image, however, reveals that new trees were planted along Luther Place and the parking lot in front of Houses 18 and 21.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Fevold, “Laying Foundations,” 41; “ELC to Dedicate \$600,000 Luther Seminary Building,” *Minneapolis Star*, June 24, 1950; Alvin N. Rogness, “Reflections on Theological Education in a Turbulent Time,” in Quanbeck et al., eds., *Striving for Ministry*, 45.

<sup>19</sup> Morell and Nichols, “Luther Theological Seminary, Grading and Dimension Plan,” July 1951, Facilities Management Files.

<sup>20</sup> Aerial photograph of Luther Seminary Campus, Photograph A-12-088, 1945, Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online, John R. Borchert Map Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (hereafter MHAPO); aerial photograph of Luther Seminary Campus, Photograph WO-3M-44, 1953, MHAPO.



*Landscape architects Morell and Nichols developed this landscape scheme for the campus in 1951 (left). The improvements altered the configuration of walkways in front of Bockman Hall and resulted in the removal of large sections of trees throughout the landscape, particularly at the southern end of the lawn area. The 1945 aerial photograph (lower left) shows much more density than the 1953 image (lower right). Young trees are visible along Luther Place and the parking lot in the later photograph. (Morell and Nichols drawing from the Luther Seminary Facilities Management Files; Aerial photographs from the Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online Collection, John R. Borchert Map Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis)*



## *Future Sights*

Not only was the seminary expanding its mission and grounds during the mid-twentieth century, but the institution experienced a surge in enrollment after World War II. A note accompanying a photograph of students and faculty members seated in front of the library while it was under construction reads: “In the years following World War II, great numbers of men enrolled in Luther Theological Seminary seeking to become pastors in the Lutheran Church.” On the eve of World War II, numbers hovered right around 150, comparable to the previous decade. In the final years of Gullixson’s term, which ended in 1954, the student body amounted to nearly 400 men. *Striving for Ministry* called the trend “an explosion . . . accounted for not only by the delays and disruption of the war period but also by the life and vigor of the synod at that time and its manpower needs.” Alvin Rogness, Gullixson’s successor, described the characteristics of the new seminarians: “Matured and seasoned by the disciplines and the violence of war, they were serious and eager students. They were no longer boys; the aura of football games and society parties were gone. They were set for the sober task of preparing for a ministry which in prospect had carried them through a war that had scattered them to all parts of the world.”<sup>21</sup>

To accommodate the expanding student body, the seminary set off on a renovation of Bockman Hall in March 1955. Within six months, however, the institution shifted its focus further north after acquiring a thirty-seven-acre site that was previously the campus of Breck School, an Episcopalian college preparatory school. With the acquisition of the former Breck site, the seminary gained two new major buildings and more than quadrupled its footprint. The expansion with the new site, called the Lower Campus, solidified the earlier campus and its village-like setting as the older core of the institution. Building improvements were largely focused on the Lower Campus in the decade following the acquisition, culminating in the 1967 construction of a new building for Northwestern Seminary, a separate Lutheran seminary that leased the land from Luther at the time. Throughout the next decades, the two seminaries would begin unification proceedings, resulting in a full merger in 1982. Meanwhile, the Lower Campus became the setting for new campus buildings and student apartments as priorities shifted away from Como Avenue and Luther Place. Few physical changes were made to the older campus as development of the Lower Campus was underway. One notable exception, however, was the removal of the clapboard siding on Muskego Church around 1970 to expose the original log construction.<sup>22</sup>

Following the 1982 merger that combined Luther Theological Seminary and Northwestern Seminary, the Upper and Lower Campuses were united with the construction of a new chapel and campus center. The seminary broke ground on the new multi-level brick facility in 1984. It was situated north of Bockman Hall along Fulham Street, providing a link between the two campuses. The two westernmost mission houses were relocated to the surrounding neighborhood to construct the new multi-function building, which was renamed Olson Campus Center in 1994.

---

<sup>21</sup> Photograph of “Panoramic view of Luther Theological Seminary student body and faculty in front of the new library and classroom building under construct, St. Paul, Minnesota,” Luther Seminary Archives Collection, Minnesota Reflections Digital Library; Fevold, “Laying Foundations,” 42; Rogness, “Reflections on Theological Education,” 45.

<sup>22</sup> Rogness, “Reflections on Theological Education,” 47–48; Roy A. Harrisville, “Luther Theological Seminary, 1876-1976,” in *Thanksgiving and Hope*, 54; Robert Paul Roth, “Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1920-1982,” in *Thanksgiving and Hope*, 67; unsigned letter to Oliver Swenumson, January 8, 1973, Muskego Church files, Seminary Archives.

The parking lot north of Bockman Hall and walkways next to the mission houses were reconfigured in conjunction with the construction. A lookout platform just west of Bockman Hall likely dates to this campaign; it was in place by 1991 according to aerial photographs.<sup>23</sup>

Sometime in the 1970s or 1980s, the seminary acquired a two-story brick apartment building located west of Bockman Hall at 1455 Fulham Street. The building was constructed in the 1920s, but it did not become part of Luther's campus until the late twentieth century. Concrete stairs, which also date to the 1920s, traverse the steep hillside to access the apartments, which are on the opposite side of Fulham Street from Bockman Hall. Fulham historically went through to Como Avenue, but the southernmost extent was vacated with the construction of the apartment building; a bend in the concrete stairs follows the course of the earlier roadway. Although they were not originally on seminary property, Fulham Street and the concrete stairs collectively formed the western boundary of the Upper Campus until the apartment building was acquired.<sup>24</sup>

Around 2000, the landscape features in front of Bockman Hall and Muskego Church were updated according to plans by Minneapolis landscape architects Damon Farber Associates. At Bockman Hall, a number of shrubs along the foundation and ten trees in front of the building were removed. New ornamental trees and shrubs were introduced to edge the sidewalks and foundation, particularly along the double walkway in front of the building, where park benches were installed. Large sections of the existing concrete paths were replaced in kind. Three circular brick insets were installed at the intersections of the walkways, which retained their triangulated configuration from the 1951 Morell and Nichols plan. Existing light fixtures were retained; these presumably are the current ones with slender metal standards topped by globe lanterns, which appear to date from the mid-twentieth century. Upgrades were minor at Muskego Church. The metal-pipe handrails and the concrete sidewalk and steps leading to the front of the church and around to the north and east sides of the building were removed and replaced in kind. The existing concrete stoop at the west (front) entrance was replaced with a wood one. Existing trees along the sidewalks and surrounding the church were saved and protected during construction.<sup>25</sup>

At some point in the second half of the twentieth century, the residences along the eastern hillside were discontinued as faculty housing and the buildings became offices for student organizations and various seminary programs. Luther archivist Paul Daniels attributed the transition to a growing preference among the professors to purchase and own their own homes independent of the seminary. Over the years, House 18 served as the Global Mission Institute and a daycare facility, although the building is now vacant. House 19 is currently vacant as well. There were plans to upgrade House 21 as the president's residence in 2001, but those

---

<sup>23</sup> Kent Johnson, "An Era of Transitions, 1976-1996," in *Thanksgiving and Hope*, 112-114; Ellen Elhard, in discussion with Jessica Berglin, February 2016; Aerial photograph of Luther Seminary Campus, photograph dated April 16, 1991, Google Earth Historical Imagery, obtained March 15, 2016.

<sup>24</sup> *Insurance Maps of Saint Paul, Minnesota, 1926-1939* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1927), 6:508; Luther Seminary campus map, December 1962, Seminary Archives; "Index to Seminary Map Houses and Apartments," January 1963, Seminary Archives; Sovik, Mathre, Santhrum, Quanbeck and Schlink Architects, "Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary Site Study-Office Rental," August 16, 1988, Facilities Management Files. The apartment building is not listed on the 1962 campus map or in the 1963 inventory of seminary houses and apartment buildings.

<sup>25</sup> Damon Farber Associates, "Site Improvements for Luther Seminary: Bockman Hall," June 16, 1998, Facilities Management Files; Damon Farber Associates, "Old Muskego Church," May 9, 2000, Facilities Management Files.

modifications were never executed. Today a private business occupies part of the house, although the building remains under Luther's ownership. Many of the other houses throughout the site also sit vacant, but are occasionally used to house students or visiting scholars and professors, according to Daniels. The buildings remain in fairly good condition and continue to convey the history of Luther Seminary, particularly its early period of expansion between 1917 and 1952 before the seminary shifted its focus to developing the Lower Campus.<sup>26</sup>

#### ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for the National Register of Historic Places, properties must meet at least one of the following four criteria:

- **Association value/Event—Criterion A:** Properties that are associated with events that have contributed to broad patterns of history.
- **Association value/Person—Criterion B:** Properties that are associated with significant persons and illustrate their achievements.
- **Design or Construction value—Criterion C:** Properties with physical characteristics which are distinctive of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- **Information value—Criterion D:** Properties that have yielded or are likely to yield important information about prehistory or history.

Properties must also be at least fifty years old unless they are of exceptional importance, and they must retain sufficient physical integrity to convey their significance. The seven aspects of integrity are location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association. Significance can be local, regional, or national, and properties can be significant individually or as contributing elements of a historic district.

The three historic houses and the non-historic garage within the project site, as well as the surrounding landscape features and other dwellings seem unlikely to qualify individually for the National Register, but they should be evaluated for their potential to contribute to a historic district. Collectively, Luther Seminary's Upper Campus appears to qualify for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Education. In 1917, three Norwegian-American Lutheran churches and their respective seminaries merged to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. Luther Theological Seminary was established under the new church to provide theological education for those seeking to enter the ministry. Following the merger, students and faculty members from the three antecedent seminaries converged at the eight-acre campus in Saint Anthony Park, the former home of Union Theological Seminary. New faculty houses were constructed around 1920 and an additional level was constructed on the central wing of the main seminary building in 1923 to respond to the growing needs of the merged institution. One of the most pressing needs, however, was the lack of a dedicated library facility. Church and seminary leaders commenced a capital campaign in 1930, but the Depression thwarted any

---

<sup>26</sup> Paul Daniels, in discussion with Jessica Berglin, February 2016; Meyer, Scherer and Rockcastle, "President's Residence Remodel," August 2001, Facilities Management Files.

progress on realizing this goal. Launching the campaign coincided with the 1930 election of Dr. Thaddeus Franke Gullixson as president of the seminary. One of Gullixson's main charges was to establish a graduate program for theological training, a primary objective of the 1917 merger. To do so, however, required having adequate facilities and faculty in place, so Gullixson enacted new policies that prioritized hiring professors with advanced degrees and revived the fundraising goals for a library. Beginning in 1936, a retirement policy was put into effect for professors aged seventy years or older. Newer professors began replacing veteran faculty members and by 1949, the seminary had an entirely new faculty roster. That same year, a new library opened after years of having resources scattered in multiple rooms in the main seminary building. The building was dedicated in 1950, and Luther Theological Seminary began offering its first graduate courses over the 1950–1951 academic year. In 1951, the seminary hired local landscape architects Morell and Nichols to update the campus as part of the school's new identity. Advanced theological education was cemented into Luther Seminary's programming in 1952 with the establishment of a Director of Graduate Studies position.

The founding of the graduate school fulfilled a primary objective of the 1917 merger, and once that was completed in 1952, the seminary began looking toward the future. In 1955, the seminary established new priorities after it purchased a thirty-seven-acre tract of land that was formerly the campus of the Breck School. Located further north along Como Avenue, the Lower Campus became the setting for the seminary's development throughout the second half of the twentieth century. New campus buildings, student housing, and recreational facilities were added to the northern site to reflect the institution's new concerns, which included merging with Augsburg Seminary and Northwestern Theological Seminary. As a result of these mergers, Luther Seminary became the largest theological training institution for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a church body that was founded in 1988 to reflect the unification of several synods within the Lutheran Church.<sup>27</sup>

### *Period of Significance*

A property's period of significance is the timeframe when the property attained the significance that qualifies it for listing in the National Register. For the older campus at Luther Seminary, the period of significance begins in 1917 and ends in 1952. These years correspond to the year Luther Theological Seminary was founded by the merger of three separate institutions and the year the longtime objective of the 1917 merger—establishing graduate programs for advanced theological training—was completed. After 1952, the seminary set its focus on new priorities, primarily the institution's expansion to a new thirty-seven-acre site to the north.

### *Integrity*

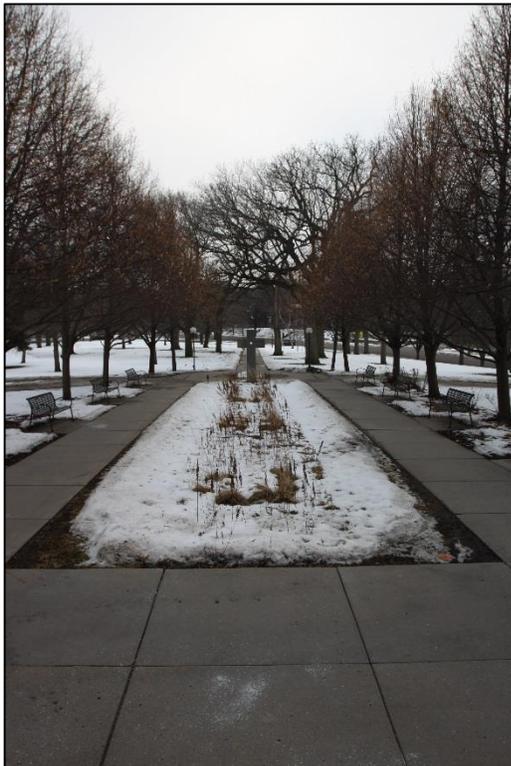
An evaluation of integrity considers the property's current condition in light of its historic evolution. The following discussion analyzes Luther Seminary's Upper Campus using the seven aspects of integrity as established by the National Register guidelines.

---

<sup>27</sup> "Mission and History," Luther Seminary, accessed March 7, 2016, [https://www.luthersem.edu/about/our\\_mission.aspx?m=5956](https://www.luthersem.edu/about/our_mission.aspx?m=5956).

Luther Seminary's Upper Campus has good integrity of location. Most of the buildings are in their original locations. One building, House 15, was moved during the period of significance, so it contributes to the district in its new location.

The campus has good integrity of design. The cluster of houses developed organically along the eastern hillside overlooking the open lawn in front of Bockman Hall. The houses were placed in close proximity to one another and to Bockman Hall, creating a village-like setting to foster interactions between faculty and students, who lived in the main building. In addition to the linear sidewalk emanating from the steps of Bockman Hall, the landscape originally featured curvilinear drives that swept through the site following principles of earlier picturesque landscape aesthetics. These were modified over time and eventually removed by the 1951 landscape scheme by Morell and Nichols. Concrete sidewalks were added to the site in conjunction with the 1948–1949 construction of Gullixson Hall. These remained intact with a few complementary alterations following the 1951 update to the grounds. In the mid-1950s, the seminary shifted its focus to the Lower Campus, which probably helped preserve the features that were in place by that time on the Upper Campus. The primary component of the landscape's design—the open view of Bockman Hall from Como Avenue—is extant and continues to be an important design element on the campus. A parking lot in front of Houses 18 and 21 has been expanded in recent years, but its placement on the site was stipulated by the Morell and Nichols landscape scheme.



*The double walkway immediately in front of Bockman Hall (left) and the diagonal walkways extending from the corners of Bockman Hall (right) were introduced in the Morell and Nichols plan. These configurations are intact, although the planting plans surrounding the walkways have been updated over time.*

The campus retains its residential setting nestled within the small nineteenth-century village-like community of Saint Anthony Park. The site was originally described as an eight-acre wooded lot, although many of the trees along the southern extent of the lawn area were removed to regrade the topography under the Morell and Nichols landscape scheme. Trees were replanted along Luther Place and the parking lot in front of Houses 18 and 21, and the site continues to have a heavily wooded character.

The campus has good integrity of materials and workmanship. Many of the houses retain original windows and decorative elements such as columns, balconies, and architectural millwork. The original clapboard siding on House 21 was replaced with vinyl at some point, but a high level of care was taken to ensure the new siding complemented the original appearance of the building.

Decorative features such as contrasting window trim, horizontal frieze boards, and divided-light windows are extant. House 19 was covered with asbestos-shingle siding at some point. Despite this, the house retains original divided-light windows and other decorative elements. The clapboard siding covering the log walls of Muskego Church was removed after the period of significance ended, altering the appearance of the hilltop church. The siding, however, was applied when the building was relocated to the seminary's campus in 1904. It was supposed to be a temporary protective measure, although the clapboard was in place for approximately seventy years. The two major buildings within the Upper Campus—Bockman Hall and Gullixson Hall—retain original brick and limestone exterior walls despite internal updates over the years. Lastly, historic landscape materials including mature tree plantings, grassy lawns, concrete sidewalks, and metal-pipe railings are extant.

All of these considerations contribute to the feeling and association for the campus. The buildings relate to their surroundings much the same way they did during the period of significance even with alterations to their original programming.



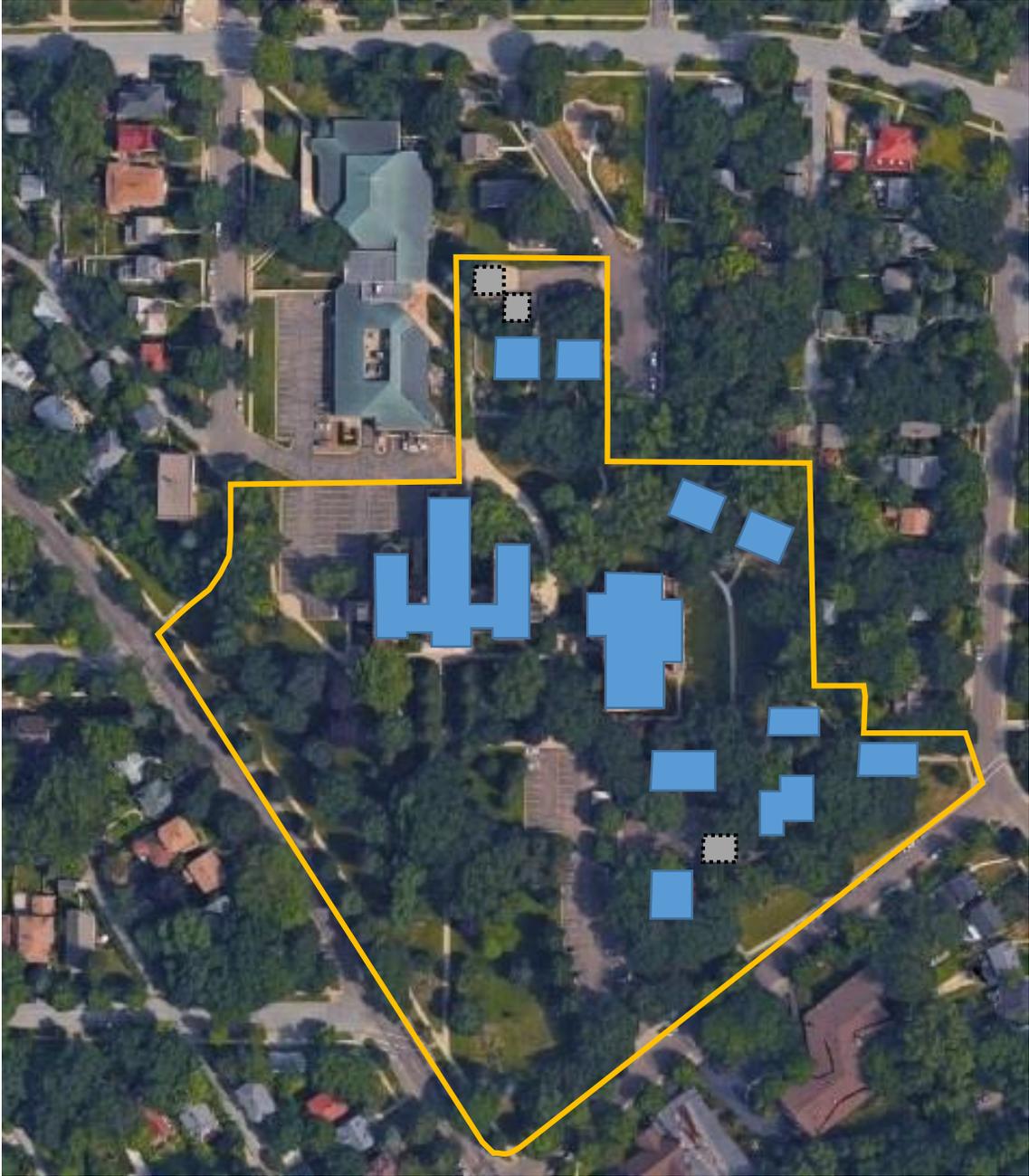
*These 2016 photographs illustrate the site's continued wooded character.*

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Through a series of mergers over the course of the twentieth century, Luther Seminary has become the largest of eight seminaries in the United States for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Established in 1917, the seminary fulfilled one of its primary foundational goals in 1952 with the creation of a graduate program. Over the course of those thirty-five years, the Upper Campus saw changes to support this goal. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, additional faculty housing was constructed to accommodate a new generation of professors, many of whom had doctorates or other graduate-level training. A dedicated library building, now known as Gullixson Hall, was constructed in 1948–1949. Previously, resources were spread throughout several rooms in Bockman Hall, but a central research facility was critical for establishing a graduate school. Seminary leaders had lobbied for a separate library for nearly thirty years before the building was constructed. With the library in place, the seminary offered its first graduate courses over the 1950–1951 academic year and cemented the program in 1952 with the creation of a Director of Graduate Studies position. In the meantime, the grounds were updated as part of the seminary’s new identity, and the campus remains fairly intact to this scheme. For its association with the early development of Luther Seminary, the Upper Campus appears to meet Criterion A in the area of Education. The period of significance is 1917 to 1952.

The recommended boundary of the historic district (illustrated on the following page) generally follows the boundary of the seminary’s original plot, but it diverges to exclude properties that were added in the late twentieth century. A summary of resources that fall within the boundary is listed below. In addition to eleven buildings, the landscape contributes to the district’s historic character. Trees, walkways, and other features that were present during the period of significance should be considered contributing elements to the historic district.

<b>Property</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Contributing/Non-contributing</b>
Bockman Hall	Building	Contributing (individually listed in the NRHP as United Church Seminary, 1984)
Muskego Church	Building	Contributing (individually listed in the NRHP, 1974)
Gullixson Hall	Building	Contributing
House 6 (former mission house)	Building	Contributing
House 7 (former mission house)	Building	Contributing
Garages next to Houses 6 and 7	Building	Non-contributing (2)
House 12	Building	Contributing
House 15	Building	Contributing
House 18	Building	Contributing
House 19	Building	Contributing
House 20	Building	Contributing
House 21	Building	Contributing
Garage next to House 21	Building	Non-contributing
Landscape	Site	Contributing



Recommended boundary for the Luther Seminary Upper Campus Historic District

-  Contributing Building
-  Non-contributing Building

## SOURCES CONSULTED

### Primary and Unpublished

Buildings and Grounds Drawings. Luther Seminary Facilities Management Office, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul.

Buildings and Grounds Files. Luther Seminary Archives, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul.

Historic Saint Paul Building Permits. Ramsey County Historical Society, Saint Paul.

Lang and Raugland Collection. Northwest Architectural Archives, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Luther Seminary Archives Collection. Minnesota Reflections Digital Library.

Minnesota Historical Aerial Photographs Online Collection. John R. Borchert Map Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Muskego Church Files. Luther Seminary Archives, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul.

### Secondary and Published

“ELC to Dedicate \$600,000 Luther Seminary Building.” *Minneapolis Star*, June 24, 1950.

Fevold, Eugene. “Laying Foundations in a New Land.” In *Striving for Ministry: Centennial Essays Interpreting the Heritage of Luther Theological Seminary*, edited by Warren A. Quanbeck, Eugene L. Fevold, Gerhard E. Frost, and Paul G. Sonnack, 11–44. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1977.

Hackett, John. “Muskego Church.” National Register of Historic Places nomination. November 1974.

Harrisville, Roy A. “Luther Theological Seminary, 1876-1976.” In *Thanksgiving and Hope, A Collection of Essays Chronicling 125 Years of the People, Events and Movements in the Antecedents Schools that have Formed Luther Seminary*, edited by Frederick H. Gonnerman, 35–58. Saint Paul: Luther Seminary, 1998.

*Insurance Maps of Saint Paul, Minnesota, 1903–1904*. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1903.

Murphy, Patricia. “United Church Seminary.” National Register of Historic Places nomination. July 1984.

*Plat Book of the City of Saint Paul*. Philadelphia: G. M. Hopkins, 1916.

Rogness, Alvin. "Reflections on Theological Education in a Turbulent Time." In *Striving for Ministry: Centennial Essays Interpreting the Heritage of Luther Theological Seminary*, edited by Warren A. Quanbeck, Eugene L. Fevold, Gerhard E. Frost, and Paul G. Sonnack, 45–65. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1977.

Roth, Robert Paul. "Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1920-1982." In *Thanksgiving and Hope, A Collection of Essays Chronicling 125 Years of the People, Events and Movements in the Antecedents Schools that have Formed Luther Seminary*, edited by Frederick H. Gonnerman, 59–82. Saint Paul: Luther Seminary, 1998.

### **Electronic**

Luther Seminary. "Mission and History." Accessed March 7, 2016. [https://www.luthersem.edu/about/our\\_mission.aspx?m=5956](https://www.luthersem.edu/about/our_mission.aspx?m=5956).